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FOR NASA REP, PLEASE PASS TO USTR

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ETTC](#) [TSPA](#) [KFPC](#) [ETRN](#) [IT](#) [IN](#)
SUBJECT: ITALIAN RESEARCH SATELLITE WITH U.S.-ORIGIN
COMPONENT LAUNCHED FROM INDIA

REF: A. 06 ROME 001585
[B](#). BYRNES-DEPARTMENT APRIL 10
[C](#). 2007 E-MAIL MESSAGE

[1](#). (U). This is an action request for the Department.
Please see paragraph 6.

[2](#). (U) At 11:00 p.m. local Rome time, April 23, India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) launched the Italian Space Agency's (ASI) AGILE research satellite from Sriharikota, India. The 352-kilogram (774 pounds) craft reached an equatorial orbit, from which it will begin a two-year mission to detect hard X-rays and gamma ray bursts, acquire information on black holes, supernovae, neutron stars, and yet-to-be-identified sources of gamma rays. As the Department is aware from the Embassy's April 10 e-mail and subsequent discussions with Italian diplomats in Washington, a U.S.-origin component listed on the USML (the reaction wheel assembly), is on board AGILE.

[3](#). (SBU) When Embassy Rome was informed by ASI on Friday (April 20) that the AGILE launch would proceed, despite the Department's confirmation to the Italian Embassy that no/no U.S.-origin components had been approved for re-transfer to India, we contacted ASI and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to make sure that the USG's objection to the launch had been understood.

[4](#). (SBU) Minister Giovanni Manfredi, Director of Office VI at the Directorate General of Multilateral Economic and Financial Cooperation, told us that after the April 19 telephone call between Italian Embassy Economic Minister Counselor Beltrane and the Department's Political-Military Bureau, the Italian Embassy sent a full report of the conversation to the Ministry of Universities and Research, which oversees ASI. MFA's message was delivered Ministry-to-Ministry at the chef de cabinet level, and emphasized the negative consequences of launching the satellite over the USG's objection. Manfredi reported, however that the Research Ministry had the final authority to decide whether or not to launch, and the MFA could only advise the Research Ministry as it made its final decision.

[5](#). (SBU) ASI's head of Bilateral Relations told us that ASI and MFA recommended the Research Ministry delay AGILE's launch from India because of the USG's policy against allowing USML components to be exported to India. She informed us that the decision to go ahead with the launch and

accept the risk of a negative reaction from the U.S. was made at the highest level within the Research Ministry. She would not speculate about the responsibility of Minister Fabio Mussi for the decision, but noted that Mussi was fully occupied with political maneuvering within the Democrats of the Left. (Note: Mussi is a prominent spokesman for the left wing of this major coalition partner in Prime Minister Romano Prodi's nine-party coalition government. End note.)

¶6. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Embassy appreciates the Department's assistance over the last year and longer, to track Italian requests to export U.S.-origin AGILE components, and to clarify the USG's evolving policy on the export of USML-listed goods to India. Please keep the Embassy informed of the USG reaction to AGILE's launch, and advise of what actions may be taken against the Italian Space Agency, the satellite contractor, Carlo Gavazzi Space, the Government of Italy, and the U.S. exporter. Spogli